

2580626

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned. It is registered to provide care for up to three children. The home's statement of purpose states that children living in this home may have a range of social and emotional difficulties.

The previous registered manager left their role in May 2023. A new manager has recently been appointed. He is in the process of submitting his application to register with Ofsted.

There were two children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 October 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/10/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/01/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is a welcoming and relaxed environment for children to live in. Children say that they feel genuinely cared for by the staff team. They feel listened to and respected. One child said, 'I feel happy and loved here.' Children enjoy spending time with the staff team. A summer activity plan and holiday have been organised for the children to create positive memories with staff.

Children participate in their care planning. The staff team also advocates on behalf of children, for example, in relation to obtaining specialist health assessments, extra educational provision and organising time for children with their families, in line with their views and wishes.

Children make progress while living in the home. They are helped to develop their confidence and self-esteem through engaging in activities and discussions with staff.

The staff team has supported children to overcome barriers to their education. They engage children in making decisions about their education. Consequently, children's educational attendance has significantly improved. Children have clear plans in place to support their educational attainment and to improve their future employment opportunities.

The staff team has accessed additional health services, such as animal therapy, to support children to develop positive emotional well-being. However, the staff team has not been proactive in helping a child to appropriately manage the time they spend on their mobile phone at bedtime. This does not support the child's emotional well-being or promote positive bedtime routines.

The staff team regularly gathers children's views about their experiences of living in the home. The manager has introduced monthly manager's consultations with the children. This provides children with an additional forum to share their views, wishes and feelings. However, opportunities to speak to children about the outcomes of their requests have been missed. This limits children's understanding of how their views are being listened to and, when possible, acted on.

Children's families are at the centre of the support that the staff team implements to promote positive outcomes for children. One child has recently had a planned move back to their family home. The staff were proactive in supporting this move. They facilitated regular welfare checks and provided continuous support to the child and their parent to support a positive transition.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Children feel safe living in the home. Families and external professionals say that staff safeguard children effectively. This is because staff develop their understanding of risks for each child to enable them to plan and deliver effective care.

Staff ensure that there are appropriate boundaries and routines in place to help children to feel secure. Children regularly receive rewards for achievements and for making positive choices. Any consequences used in response to negative behaviours are proportionate to the child's behaviour and restorative in nature.

Incidents of children going missing from the home are few. The staff team responds to and manages these incidents well. Staff work hard to understand patterns of behaviour and triggers for children. Staff use their positive relationships with children to openly discuss any concerns that they have about the child's welfare.

The use of restraint is rare. Staff use a range of de-escalation techniques to help children when they become upset. The manager oversees all records to ensure that there is thorough recording and evaluation of all serious incidents, including debriefs with everyone involved. Staff use child-friendly worksheets to reflect on incidents with children. This helps children to feel understood and supports them to make safer choices.

Incidents of children displaying self-injurious behaviours have reduced. Staff undertake effective and meaningful direct-work sessions with children to help them to reflect on their feelings and to identify alternative coping strategies. A sensory coping box helps one child to manage difficult emotions.

Risk management plans and guides for staff to follow in response to incidents of self-harm are generic. These are not individualised and do not provide strategies for staff to follow in line with children's individual needs or risks. This limits opportunities for staff to respond to children in ways that are helpful to each child.

Children know how to make a complaint and feel that their concerns will be taken seriously by the staff team. However, allegations and complaints have not always been dealt with in accordance with the organisation's policies and procedures. Opportunities to ensure that those involved are spoken to and that children receive feedback following incidents have been missed. These shortfalls limit both the manager's oversight of incidents and children's understanding of action that has been taken to keep them safe.

There is no reported bullying in the home. Staff respond quickly to disagreements between children and use mediation to resolve issues and prevent them escalating.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The manager is suitably qualified. He is in the process of completing his application to register with Ofsted. The transition from one manager to the next has been smooth. This has provided reassurance to the children and the staff team. The manager has built positive relationships with the children and his staff team. He is present, supportive and personable.

The manager is supported by a deputy manager. They are organised and are committed to improving outcomes for children. The manager recognises the home's strengths and the areas for development. He has improved partnership working and communication through regular consultation with other professionals and children's families.

Staff receive regular practice-related supervision, in line with their probation period and any additional development needs. Supervisions are reflective and enable staff to share their views, suggestions or concerns about the operation of the home. The induction process for newly recruited staff is monitored well by managers and provides staff with the support they require in the early stages of their employment.

The manager monitors staff training needs to ensure that he has a skilled and knowledgeable team. He arranges training for staff that is specific to the needs and risks of children in the home. Recently, he has implemented a new team meeting agenda to include a broader range of standing agenda items to discuss with staff, such as safeguarding, the independent visitor's recommendations and children's views from house meetings. However, lessons learned from investigations are not routinely shared with the staff team. This limits opportunities to learn from incidents and to improve the overall quality of care provided to children.

Quality assurance visits conducted by a senior manager provides additional scrutiny of the operation of the home. It supports the manager's oversight of the home effectively and identifies any areas for development. However, the manager's review of the quality of care report does not provide a robust evaluation of the impact of the care provided to children, as it does not include feedback from children, staff, families or professionals about their experiences. Internal monitoring processes have also failed to identify shortfalls around the resolution of a complaint.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The health and well-being standard is that— children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 10 (1)(c) (2)(a)(i)) Specifically, supporting a child to appropriately manage the time they spend on their mobile phone at bedtime, to promote healthy sleep patterns and positive emotional well-being.	25 August 2023
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires, and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(a)(g)(ii))	25 August 2023

Specifically, leaders and managers must follow the company's policies and procedures in relation to appropriately investigating allegations and complaints.	
In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating— the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities, and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (2)(b)(c) (5))	25 August 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are provided with feedback about the action taken in relation to requests made in house meetings and manager's monthly consultations. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- The registered person should ensure that when there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their risk management plans, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include all details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. This specifically relates to including clear and individualised guidance in children's risk management plans for staff to follow if a child tries to harm themselves. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2580626

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hexagon Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 1, Tustin Court, Riversway, Preston,
Lancashire PR2 2YQ

Responsible individual: Caroline Holmes

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector
Andrea Foreman, Social Care Inspector

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